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SPEECH BY THE HONORABLE DEAN ACHESON, SECRETARY OF STATE, BEFORE THE PAN-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES, AT THE ROOSEVELT HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1949, AT 9:30 P.M., E.D.T.

Waging Peace in the Americas

I am grateful to the Pan-American Society for this welcome opportunity to meet with its distinguished membership and with so many friends from throughout the Western Hemisphere. It is a most appropriate setting in which to discuss the relations within our community of American republics. There are two reasons in particular why I am glad to be able to discuss this subject tonight. The first is so obvious that we tend to take it for granted. It is that our countries are close neighbors, bound together by a common heritage of struggles for liberty and freedom.

The second reason is that the community between our countries presents us with a unique opportunity to press forward towards the positive objectives of our foreign policy. Much of our effort in other parts of the world has had to be devoted to repairing the destruction caused by war and to strengthening the free nations against aggression. We in this Hemisphere have fortunately been spared the terrible destruction of war, and we are relatively remote from any direct threat against our independence. The prospects are, therefore, bright that we can continue to work together in an atmosphere of relative peace and stability. We are in a real sense waging peace in the Americas.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Before discussing specific policies, it seems well to restate once more the basic principles on which our policy in this Hemisphere must rest. They are:

Our essential faith in the worth of the individual.

The preservation of our way of life without trying to impose it on others.

The observance by all governments of ethical standards based on justice and respect for freely accepted international obligations.

Protection of the legitimate interests of our people and government, together with respect for the legitimate interests of all other peoples and governments.

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We, the nations of this Hemisphere, have a responsibility not only to ourselves but to the rest of the world to live together in peace and harmony. Together we have played an important part in creating the United Nations. We must live up to the responsibilities which we have thus assumed towards the other member nations. This means, among other things, that we must abide by our regional commitments and maintain peace in our own midst. If all of the countries of the Hemisphere proceed along these lines, as we in this country intend to do, there is no reason why any nation in the Hemisphere should fear aggression.

DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

What I have said, however, should not be construed as blind adherence to the status quo. We oppose aggression; we do not oppose change. Indeed, we welcome and encourage change where it is in the direction of liberty and democracy. We have worked long and persistently in common with our neighbors toward this end.

We would like to see a world in which each citizen participates freely in determining periodically the identity of the members of his government. This is an objective for which we will continue to work, subject always to our common policy of non-intervention.

In the Americas we have had periods of high hope and periods of bitter discouragement as we have seen democratic institutions flourish in some countries, only to see them subverted in others. We always deplore the action of any group in substituting its judgment for that of the electorate. We especially deplore the overthrow by force of a freely elected government. In such situations we do not cease to hope that the people will regain the right to choose their leaders.

We realize, however, that the attainment of the democratic ideal in any country depends fundamentally upon the desires and efforts of the people of that country. The nature of democrac is such that it can be achieved only from within.

Democracy as we endeavor to practice it is a continuing development toward political maturity -- not a formula to be imposed upon a nation by a self-appointed ruling class, as is the case with certain other forms of government. Its attainment is essentially a spiritual and personal problem to be solved by the people of each country for themselves.

We are encouraged in our purpose by the realization that the strength of democratic institutions throughout the Hemisphere today is measurably greater than a generation ago. In spite of occasional disappointments, we note a steady forward progress. The spirit of democracy is alive and bearing fruit.

RECOGNITION

Our policy with respect to recognizing new governments in the Hemisphere is not inconsistent with our encouragement of democracy. We maintain diplomatic relations with other countries primarily because we are all on the same planet and must do business with each other. We do not establish an embassy or legation in a foreign country to show approval of its government. We do so to have a channel through which to conduct essential governmental relations and to protect legitimate United States interests.

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While material well-being is no guarantee that democracy will flourish, a healthy and prosperous people is a far more fertile field for the development of democracy than one which is undernourished and unproductive. That is why we are and must be preoccupied with the long-term problem of economic development.

The record of our economic cooperation in this Hemisphere is substantial. It is one of such proven soundness that it forms the precedent and the basis for the more constructive labor ahead.

For ten years past a large work of technical cooperation has been under way throughout our countries. Our Government participates in this work through many of its agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Public Health Service. Our Institute of Inter-American Affairs is cooperating with agencies of the other governments in outstandingly successful programs to improve basic living conditions. Technicians and administrators from the United States and from the host countries work side by side in partnership with each other. They work among the peoples in the remote countryside as well as in the cities. The Institute of Inter-American Affairs has now been authorized by Congress to continue and to expand this work. These programs have furnished the inspiration and the proving ground for the worldwide program of technical cooperation envisaged in Point Four of President Truman's inaugural address.

In 1935, we created the Export-Import Bank which has become a uniquely successful institution in the field of economic development. The steel mill at Volta Redonda in Brazil is in full operation and a life-long desire of many Brazilian statesmen and businessmen has become a reality with a plentiful supply of steel products to complement the vigorous growth of industry in that country. At Concepcion in Chile we shall soon see the realization of another project which has been brought about by the combination of energy on the part of Chilean leaders and cooperation by the Export-Import Bank in supplying the material needs to bring the idea into fruit. There are constructive evidences throughout the Americas of the good use to which Export-Import credits have been put -- in the Artibonite Valley in Haiti, in meat packing plants in Mexico -- in highways in many countries, in ships, power systems, public works, agricultural projects, large and small industrial undertakings. The total amount of loans advanced by the Bank to the other American republics is over $700,000,000. Default on these loans are insignificant.

The International Bank and the International Monetary Fund created at Bretton Woods in 1944 largely on the initiative of the United States, today are actively contributing to economic development and fiscal stability in this Hemisphere. The Bank already has made loans to several American nations for basic development and the Fund has assisted in the solution of currency problems. Through our representation in both institutions, we shall continue our vigorous support of these constructive policies.

These specific programs represent actual deeds -- not merely words. Nor are they isolated examples but rather parts of a broad program of economic cooperation which, while reflecting our national self-interest, can leave no doubt as to our deep and lasting concern with the economic welfare of the other American republics.

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and through international bodies, to working out specific programs with individual countries. Possibly this principle might be expanded to the working out of regional programs if two or more countries should seek to plan jointly for economic development.

I cannot stress too strongly that progress will come most rapidly in countries that help themselves vigorously. Economic development, like democracy, cannot be imposed from outside. Positive self-help is also essential to establishing conditions of economic stability and of fair treatment for private investments and the rights of labor. In countries where such conditions are provided, it will follow that we can collaborate more effectively in working out development programs. Public and private capital will be attracted more readily to such countries. While this is dictated by logic rather than emotion, it has been our experience that these conditions are generally founded in countries where constitutional and political democracy exists.

CONCLUSION

These then are our three major objectives -- the security of our nation and of the Hemisphere; the encouragement of democratic representative institutions; and positive cooperation in the economic field to help in the attainment of our first two objectives.

If I have said nothing new tonight, it may well be because, in a family of nations as in families of individuals we should expect nothing more sensational than growth.

We can take satisfaction in the stability of our policy in the Hemisphere. The Good Neighbor Policy as we practice it today is, for us, an historic, bipartisan, national policy. It has been wrought by democrats at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue -- President Roosevelt, Secretary Hull and Senator Connally, and also by Republicans at both ends of the Avenue -- President Hoover, Secretary Stimson and Senator Vandenberg. And this by no means exhausts the distinguished list who have contributed to this great policy.

It is the firm intention of President Truman, as it is of myself as Secretary of State -- of the entire personnel of my Department and, I believe, of the people of my country -- to work for ever closer relations between the nations of this Hemisphere. We seek by positive good will and effort to strengthen the Organization of American States, within the more extensive design of the United Nations, as the most effective expression of law and order in this Hemisphere.

We and the other American republics have determined and pledged ourselves to carry on our common policy of the Good Neighbor as a living and constantly growing reality.

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